

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JUNE 15, 1860.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. HALE made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany Bill H. R. 267.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was recommitted the "bill (H. R. 267) for the relief of Mrs. A. W. Angus, widow of the late Captain Samuel Angus, United States navy," have had the same under consideration, and report:

The petitioner alleges that her husband was dismissed from the service for an act committed while insane from the effects of a wound on his head, which he received while fighting the battles of his country, and prays to be allowed the pay which her husband would have received if he had remained in service, and to be placed with respect to pension as she would have been if he had not been dismissed.

Captain Samuel Angus was summarily dismissed the naval service by President Monroe, after having distinguished himself in the war of 1812, and continued on active duty for 25 years, for writing an insulting letter to the Secretary of the Navy. The original testimony filed in the case, which accompanies the House bill, consists of the affidavits of three surgeons and six other citizens, and proves that Captain Angus was insane at the time he wrote this unfortunate letter, and was subject to fits of insanity, caused by a wound on his head received in the attack at "Black Rock." Cooper, in his naval history, gives an account of this engagement, and of the gallant conduct of Captain Angus, who, he says, received a dangerous wound on the head from the butt of a musket. Additional testimony from a number of captains now in service has been laid before your committee, several of them speaking of their personal knowledge as to his insanity, and all of them as to the opinion of the navy at that time on the unsound condition of his mind. They speak in high terms of his bravery, zeal, and general good conduct up to about the time of his dismissal. Certified copies of original letters from Captain Angus, now on file in the Navy Department, have been laid before your committee, which letters were written during a lucid interval, subsequent to his dismissal, and when informed of the cause thereof. They contain the most humble apologies, and the most earnest appeals for restoration, stating that he had no recollection of ever having written the letter com-

plained of. Mr. Monroe, on retiring from office, became convinced of the injustice he had unintentionally done, and in a letter to his successor, Mr. Adams, he admits the fact, and suggests his restoration, saying "it comports with justice, as well as humanity, to reinstate Captain Angus."

The objection to disturbing promotions when once made, together with the continued attacks of insanity to which he remained subject, it is presumed, prevented him being recommissioned in the navy, "and he sank into his grave" (to use the words of the widow's memorial) "dejected and broken-hearted, more deeply wounded by his own country than by its enemies, whom he had ever been ready to encounter."

Congress has, in late years, provided for officers of the navy incapacitated, as he was, by injuries received in service in the line of duty, not by dismissing them from the service, but by placing them in honorable retirement; not on a pension of \$600 per annum, but on leave pay, which, until the late increase, was for captains, \$2,500 per annum. Congress has restored to officers, who were dropped or retired and subsequently restored or changed from furlough to leave, the pay of which they had been deprived. In the case of an army officer who was wrongfully compelled to leave the service, and some years subsequently returned to it, the pay and allowances accruing in the meantime were allowed to him by Congress. And in the case of an insane navy officer, whose name was dropped from the rolls under a mistake, in 1813, being reported dead, but who did not really die until 1837, Congress, on the recommendation of the Navy Department, allowed his administrator the pay accruing between his reported and actual death.

In granting the appeal of the widow of this gallant officer, your committee feel they are but complying with the recommendation of the President, who removed him, as far as now may be, and without injury to any one. It is not restoring an incompetent officer to the navy, and interfering with the promotion of active and competent men, but doing a simple act of justice, by restoring to his family, who are now poor, the pay which he would have received if he had not been dismissed. Had he not been dismissed, he would have drawn his half pay and pension. He received his pension, and, under the circumstances, your committee think the pay should not be withheld. We therefore concur in the House report, and recommend the passage of their bill, which passed the House without an objection.